

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/832,645

Examiner

James S. Wozniak

Applicant(s)

SATOH, KOUICHI

Art Unit

2626

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment filed on 3/26/2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-5 and 7-15 (now claims 1-14).
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. In response to the office action from 10/26/2006, the applicant has submitted an amendment canceling claims 16-23, filed on 3/26/2007. Remaining claims 1-5 and 7-15 were indicated as being allowable for the reasons given in the prior Office action (*see Non-Final OA from 10/26/2006*). Thus, these claims are allowable over the prior art of record for those reasons, which have been repeated below.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. **Claims 1-5 and 7-15** are allowable over the prior art of record.
3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

With respect to **Claims 1, 8-10, and 14**, the prior art of record fails to explicitly teach or fairly suggest, either individually or in combination, a vehicle navigation system and method which performs speech recognition on a user's speech, identifies the language of a user's speech through the recognized speech input, obtains an image of a road sign containing characters indicating driving instructions or information using a camera and image recognition, identifies the language of the road sign characters, and translates the obtained road sign characters into the language of the user for display on a screen or output as synthesized speech, in combination with

an intersection guiding means that contains intersection records, generates intersection guiding images in a recognized user's language, and generates intersection guiding speech.

Although Van Ryzin (*U.S. Patent: 5,844,505*) discloses a vehicle navigation system and method utilizing a camera for performing image recognition on road signs for display to a driver, Van Ryzin fails to disclose the intersection guiding means as specified in the independent claims, nor makes any mention of intersection-based vehicle navigation or the use of speech recognition in determining the language of a speaker.

While Behr et al (*U.S. Patent: 5,808,566*) does disclose intersection-based navigation (*Col. 5, Lines 32-44; Fig 6; Col. 20, Lines 21-25; and Col. 20, Line 53- Col. 21, Line 29*), Behr does not disclose an intersection guiding means having a record including a plurality of intersection name strings in different languages, the use of speech recognition in determining the language of a speaker, nor generated guiding speech corresponding to a displayed intersection image.

Thus, claims 1, 8-10, and 14 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Claims 2-5, 7, 11-13, and 15, further limit an allowable independent claim, and thus, are also allowable over the prior art of record.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."


Conclusion

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James S. Wozniak whose telephone number is (571) 272-7632. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th, 7:30-5:00, F, 7:30-4, Off Alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Edouard can be reached at (571) 272-7603. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

James S. Wozniak
5/28/2007


PATRICK EDOUARD
SUPERVISOR/PATENT EXAMINER